

# Stebbing Parish

## Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group

### Constitution and Terms of Reference dated 7<sup>th</sup> June 2016

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#### 1. Introduction

On 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016, Stebbing Parish Council (hereafter referred to as the “Parish Council”) decided to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, as required by the Localism Act 2011 and the applicable Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. A Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as the “Plan”) is a community-led framework for guiding the future sustainable development, regeneration and conservation of an area.

The Parish Council has advised Uttlesford District Council of their intention, on behalf of the residents of Stebbing Parish, to produce a Plan and the Parish Council will be the body that formally submits the Plan to Uttlesford District Council as the relevant body.

In order to produce the Plan, the Parish Council established a Steering Group to oversee a process that will result in the preparation of a draft Plan which will ultimately be put to a public referendum.

The Plan will be for the Neighbourhood Area of the Parish of Stebbing, Essex. A copy of the map with details of the parish boundary can be obtained from the Clerk to the Parish Council, Mr Greg King, whose contact details are: The Old Stables, High Street, Stebbing, CM6 3SG, telephone 01371-855805, email: clerk@stebbingparishcouncil.org.uk. A copy can also be found with the letter of application dated 26th April 2016 by the Parish Council to Uttlesford District Council to designate the Parish of Stebbing a “Neighbourhood Area” for the purpose of producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

#### 2. The Aim of the Plan

The Plan will seek to create a vision for all aspects of future development in the Parish and will reflect the views of the community as a whole. The creation of the Plan will be via open process and supported by a comprehensive evidence base.

The Plan will be produced with due consideration for the needs of all residents and businesses now and in the future. The Plan will seek to improve the social, economic, cultural and environmental well-being of the area and those residing in it.

The success of the development of the Plan will depend on community consultation, a high level of community engagement throughout the project and the voluntary work of the members of the Steering Group and Working Groups.

The Neighbourhood Plan will first be subject to Independent Examination, then a public referendum and will not be adopted by Uttlesford District Council as planning policy until this process has been completed.

### **3. Name and Principles**

The name of the Group shall be The Stebbing Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group (hereafter referred to as the “Steering Group”).

The Steering Group will undertake the process in a democratic, transparent and fair fashion, encouraging wide participation and giving equal consideration to opinions and ideas from all members of the community. All decisions made shall be fully evidenced and supported through consultation with the local community.

### **4. Purpose, Objects and Responsibilities**

The purpose of the Steering Group shall be to support the Parish Council to carry out the following tasks and functions, namely to:

Investigate and identify support for the creation and development of a community led Plan for the Stebbing Parish area and to.

- i. Be accountable for steering and providing strategic management of the Plan.
- ii. Produce, monitor, set priorities and update project timetables for action in the project for the development stages of the Plan, including by the relevant authorities and organisations to be consulted and approached.
- iii. Identify potential sources of project funding to assist in the preparation and submission of the Plan.
- iv. Take responsibility for planning, budgeting and monitoring expenditure on the Plan and report back to the Parish Council on these matters.
- v. Liaise with relevant authorities and organisations so as to make the Plan as effective and consistent with national and local policies as possible.
- vi. Identify ways of involving the whole community and gather the views and opinions of as many groups and organisations in the community as possible.
- vii. Determine the types of survey, sources, evidence (existing and new) and information gathering to be used.
- viii. Subject to funding, commission advisory services, surveys or other activities consistent with the Objects.
- ix. Undertake and be responsible for the analysis of the surveys, to ensure that any conclusions reached are fully evidenced and that the views, aspirations and issues of the community are duly represented.
- x. Produce and distribute any interim, draft and final reports and plans and a final submission version of the Plan, subject to prior ratification by the Parish Council.

## **5. Membership**

- i. The Steering Group will be made up from a wide cross-section of volunteers from the community, including Parish Councillors to be nominated by the Parish Council.
- ii. Members of the Steering Group shall be residents of the Parish or occupy as owner or tenant land or premises or work (as principal employment) in the Parish.
- iii. All Steering Group members shall abide by and comply with the principles and practice of the Parish Council Code of Conduct, including as to declarations of interest.

## **6. Defining Roles**

- i. At the first meeting, the Steering Group will elect a Chairperson and Finance coordinator. The Secretary of the Steering Group will be the Clerk to the Parish Council.
- ii. The Steering Group will also elect a Communications Co-ordinator and a Volunteer Co-ordinator.
- iii. Wherever possible all other members of the Steering Group should have a specific role, to be agreed by the Steering Group.

## **7. Roles & Relationships with the Parish Council**

- i. The Parish Council insurance will cover the undertaking of the above described purposes and objects and agreed activities undertaken by members of the Steering Group and volunteers, but Steering Group members, in liaison with the Parish Clerk, shall ensure that the terms and conditions of the insurance are not breached.
- ii. Parish Councillors who are members of the Steering Group will liaise between the two bodies and shall provide the Parish Council with regular reports for endorsement.
- iii. The Parish Council will provide the opportunity for the endorsement of regular reports via its meetings agenda.

## **8. Meetings of the Steering Group**

- i. The Steering Group shall normally meet monthly (but every two months as a minimum), or more frequently as may be required. It is intended that the meetings will last no longer than 2 hours and proposed that public questions and issues to be raised will be limited to 3 minutes per question/issue with a maximum of 20 minutes allowed in total. Public questions will take place as the last item of business. Meetings shall be held within the Parish.
- ii. At least three clear days' notice of meetings shall be sent to members via the communication method agreed with, and appropriate to, each individual member.

- iii. Whenever possible, notices of meetings should detail the matters to be discussed. Dates of meetings shall be made available via the Parish Council website and noticeboards.
- iv. The Secretary shall keep a record of meetings, and circulate notes to Steering Group members and the Parish Council in a timely fashion. The latter will publicise the notes via their usual methods.
- v. All meetings shall be open to the public.
- vi. To be quorate, there should be a minimum of 4 members of the Steering Group present, one of which must be a Parish Councillor.

## **9. Working Groups**

The Steering Group may establish such Working Groups as it considers necessary to carry out the functions specified by the Steering Group. Working Groups will be asked to carry out duties requested by the full Steering Group, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Data and evidence gathering.
- Research.
- Consultations with and obtaining feedback from the Community.
- Making recommendations.

The make-up and functions of Working Groups will be regularly reviewed by the full Steering Group. Meetings of the Working Groups do not need to be held in public, but they shall provide notes of their meetings to the Clerk of the Parish Council for distribution to the Steering Group.

Each Working Group should have a lead person who shall be a member of the Steering Group, so as to aid coordination and reporting to the Steering Group.

Working Groups shall not have the power to authorize expenditure on behalf of the Steering Group. Working Groups shall be bound by the terms of reference set out for them by the Steering Group.

## **10. Finance**

All grants and funding will be applied for and held by the Parish Council, who will ring-fence the funds awarded/received and which shall be applied for Neighbourhood Development Plan purposes only.

Notification of all planned expenditure by the Steering Group above £250 will be given to the Parish Council before actual costs are incurred.

The Finance Coordinator shall keep a clear record of expenditure incurred, supported by receipted invoices and will regularly review and update the budget in liaison with the

Parish Clerk.

The Finance Coordinator in partnership with the Parish Clerk, will draw up and agree with the Steering Group procedures for volunteers who wish to claim expenses.

The Finance Coordinator will report back to the Steering Group and the Parish Council on planned and actual expenditure for the project.

Invoices will be made out in the name of the Parish Council who will pay them at their next scheduled Parish Council meeting.

Members of the community who are involved as volunteers with any of the Working Groups may claim back any previously agreed expenditure that was necessarily incurred during the process of producing the Plan. This includes, but is not limited to postage, stationery, printing, copying, telephone calls and travel costs.

### **11. Changes to the Constitution and Terms of Reference**

This Constitution and these Terms of Reference may be amended with the support of at least two-thirds (voting in person or by electronic means) of the then current membership of the Steering Group, with the approval of the Parish Council.

### **12. Freedom of Information**

In accordance with The Freedom of Information Act 2000, as an extension of a Local Authority, the Steering Group will make available to the public, minutes of meetings, policies and procedures, its organizational structure and information on budget and expenditure.

### **13. Data Protection**

The Steering Group will comply with The Data Protection Act 1988.

### **14. Dissolving the Steering Group**

At the conclusion of the Plan project, and once its objectives have been attained, the Parish Council and the Steering Group shall discuss the future working of the Steering Group. Thereafter, if the Steering Group wishes to dissolve, it must notify the Parish Council.

The Parish Council shall thereafter dispose of any remaining funds awarded or received on behalf of the Steering Group in accordance with the conditions of the grant or other funders and otherwise in the best interests of the Parish.

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Robert James, Chairman. 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2016.

Considered and Adopted by a Meeting of the Steering Group held on 7th June 2016, and countersigned by The Chairman thereof, recording the same.